

Spalding Chamber September 2013

RECORDED CRIME

Last financial year, South Holland achieved a 21% reduction in crime: the best reduction in Lincolnshire. This meant just over 1000 fewer victims than the previous financial year. This year we continue to build on this success, and are currently showing a 14% reduction since 1st April. That's 247 less victims compared to the same period last year.

Specifically, within the Spalding Town Centre beat we have recorded the following:

- Theft from vehicles shows a 65% reduction (8 compared to 15 last year)
- Violence against the person shows a 12% reduction (62 compared to 79)
- Public disorder shows a 39% reduction (20 compared to 33)
- We have had a 5% increase in shoplifting offences (75 compared to 71)

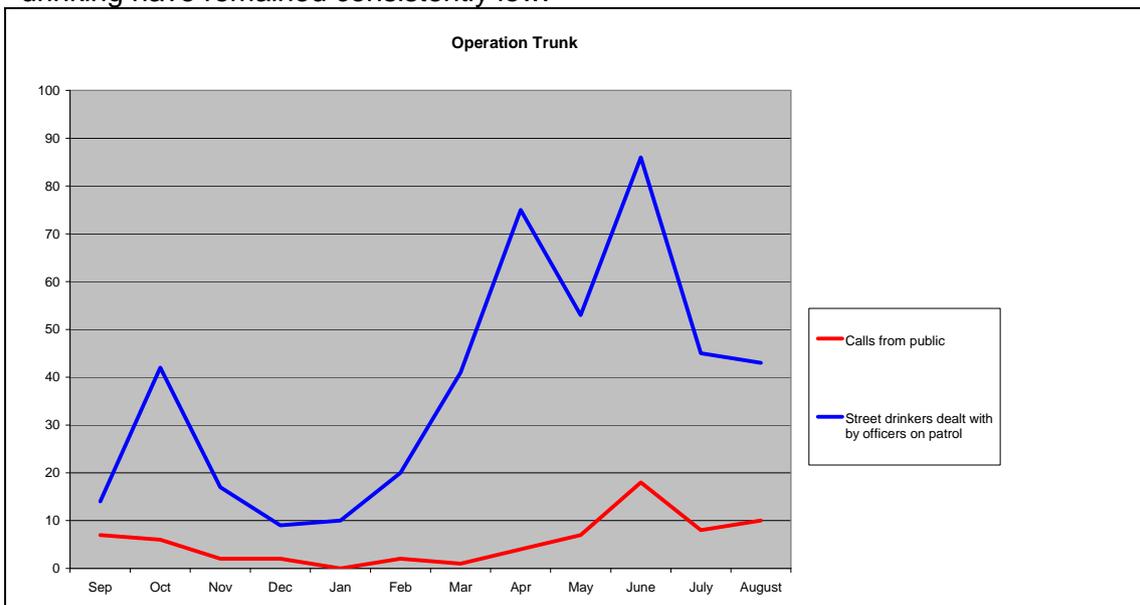
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

South Holland have recorded 246 fewer ASB incidents (29% reduction) than this time last year. This includes improvement in the levels of reported incidents of Vehicle Nuisance (66% reduction) and Drunken Behaviour (70% reduction).

Street Drinking

Street drinking in Spalding town centre remains an area of concern for many people. Operation Trunk continues to deal with this issue and I have officers committed to street patrols on foot and on bicycles every day.

The graph below shows that actual calls from members of the public about street drinking have remained consistently low.



We continue to deal with this because the public tell us this is an issue that gives them concern. A year ago we were getting a significant number of calls from the public about street drinkers. Although calls from the public about street drinking have now dramatically reduced, we are still targeting this. For example in April we dealt with 75 street drinkers, while only receiving 4 calls from members of the public complaining about drinkers. In May we dealt with 39, while over the same period we had only 7 calls from members of the public. June was particularly busy: we dealt with 80 street drinkers and had 18 calls from members of the public. However in July, despite the same level of policing activity, we have only come across 45 drinkers.

We focus on all parts of the Designated Area. To give an idea of the extent of our activity, in June street drinkers were found and dealt with at the following locations:

- Riverbank, Double St X 26
- Gore Lane X 9
- Commercial Rd X 8
- Swimming Pool X 4
- Chapel Lane X 2
- Churchgate X 2
- Hall Place X 10
- Victoria St X 8
- Castle Sports Centre X 5
- Westlode St X 3
- Red Lion St X 2
- Abbey Passage X 1

There is new legislation going through the parliamentary process at present. This new law will replace the current DPPO law. I am working behind the scenes with our MP, John Hayes and members of South Holland District Council to ensure that the new law meets our needs. We are fighting hard for the introduction of 'on the spot fines'. While we may not receive the change that we would wish for, one consequence of our activity is that Spalding has been selected by the Home Office to be used as a case study for the new legislation.

Vehicle Nuisance

Vehicle related anti-social behaviour remains an area of concern, particularly around the Holland Market car-park in Spalding.

To demonstrate the difficulty in enforcement, let me give you my two points of view: like many people I live just off Woolram Wygate and in the evening I can hear cars revving excessively and brakes, screeching ,etc. However, from the comfort of my home, I can't see which car is causing problems, or where it is. I can guess that it's Sainsbury's Car Park, but I don't know for certain.

If I am on duty and respond to calls from the public and go to the Holland Market car park, what I find is several cars grouped together in the car park. It's impossible to tell which driver has been driving anti-socially. We patrol the car parks regularly and we occasionally have success in witnessing the bad driving ourselves, when we do we take proper enforcement action, which can result in the vehicle being seized. We have some limited success with unmarked police vehicles, but once used the cars are recognised in the future.

There is not an easy short-term solution to this: if my officers are patrolling the area, then it doesn't happen, but my officers can not be there all the time. Longer term solutions will involve working with the landowners.

CCTV

At Spalding Police Station we host the CCTV equipment provided by South Holland District Council. We rely on a small but dedicated team of volunteers to run this system and, as mentioned above, we are always looking for more volunteers.

There are currently 6 CCTV systems within Lincolnshire and all are different. All authorities are looking at finding savings and inevitably this could involve cutting some live cover. The county Community Safety Partnership has commissioned a technology report for a future countywide system. Technically I don't believe that there are any issues, but politically there may be challenges. All Councils are at different stages of CCTV evolution. Some may have recently replaced their systems and be reluctant. If there was to be a scheme then South Holland would benefit because it could potentially be monitored 24/7.

While our CCTV system may not be perfect, I am certain that it contributes to the prevention of crime and disorder in Spalding town centre. I am concerned that the absence of CCTV would be seen as a magnet for travelling criminals.

CCTV Volunteers

Our original 3 volunteers provide cover every day (but not 24/7)

3 Prayer Pastors have also trained as CCTV volunteers to cover when Street Pastors are on patrol.

4 other volunteers have just started. 2 of these will cover the night time economy (NTE).

4 others are currently undergoing vetting. 3 of these have committed to NTE work

Conclusion

I am pleased with our overall reduction in crime. I am conscious of ongoing challenges around anti-social behaviour.

When I last reported to you, I said that our credibility over the next few months would largely be judged by Operation Trunk. We use Twitter to let people know about our work on Operation Trunk. The feedback that we receive on our @spaldingpolice Twitter account is generally supportive of the action that we are taking. I want to share a message that I received on Twitter: '**You and your PCSOs are changing Spalding**'.

Jim Tyner
Community Policing Inspector
South Holland